

Cal/EPA Environmental Justice Action Plan

Pilot Project Summary for Reduction of Air Pollution Exposure in Urban Communities in Southern California

March 25, 2005

I. Lead Agency: Air Resources Board (ARB)

II. Project Area: The communities of Commerce, Mira Loma, and Wilmington in Los Angeles metropolitan area.

Area Demographics:

- **Commerce:** 2% African American; 2% Asian; 90% Hispanic or Latino (of any race); and 6% White; residents living below the poverty level: 23%.
- **Mira Loma:** 6% African American; 4% Asian; 44% Hispanic or Latino (of any race); 42% White; 4% other; living below the poverty level: 12%.
- **Wilmington:** 6% African American; 8% Asian; 71% Hispanic or Latino (of any race); 13% White; 2% other; living below the poverty level: 23%.

III. Background: The Children's Environmental Risk Reduction Plan (ChERRP) is designed to explore applications of strategies for reducing children's environmental risks. ARB staff will lead a pilot project in Southern California focusing on reducing air pollution exposure and risk to children. The pilot project will be a collaborative effort with the community, other Cal/EPA Boards, Offices, and Departments (BDOs), local agencies and businesses, and other stakeholders. The pilot project will include the exploration of ways to assess cumulative risks and to apply precautionary approaches. While we will be focusing these projects on community specific issues, it is our intent to identify applications and strategies in this pilot project that can be transferable to other communities throughout the State.

This pilot project provides ARB and other Cal/EPA BDOs opportunities to explore concepts and develop tools to address the complex environmental justice issues of cumulative impacts and precautionary approaches. For the purposes of this pilot project, the working definition of cumulative impacts is "the exposures, public health or environmental effects from the combined emissions and discharges, in a geographic area, including environmental pollution from all sources, whether single or multi-media, routinely, accidentally, or otherwise released. Impacts take into account sensitive populations and socioeconomic factors, where applicable and to the extent data are available." The working definition of precautionary approaches is "taking anticipatory action to protect public health or the environment if a reasonable threat of serious harm exists based upon the best available science and other relevant information, even if absolute and undisputed scientific evidence is not available to assess the exact nature and extent of risk." These working definitions were approved by Cal/EPA's Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice at a meeting held on February 16th, 2005. Incorporating these definitions into our pilot project will provide us the opportunity explore their application at the community level.

IV. Project Start Date: Immediately.

V. Project End Date: 4th Qtr 2006

VI. Goal & Objectives:

a. Goal: To better understand cumulative impacts from air pollution, to incorporate environmental data from other media where available, and to reduce community health risk from air pollution with a special focus on children.

b. Objectives:

- Improve understanding of sources of air pollution in communities where children live and play
- Identify regulatory and data gaps
- Identify methods for assessing cumulative impacts and applying precautionary approaches
- Assess impacts of port, rail, and trucking activity on local communities
- Explore enforcement and mitigation opportunities
- Involve other Cal/EPA BDOs, the community, local agencies, and other stakeholders throughout the process

VII. Activities – Planning, Implementation, Evaluation, & Deliverables

Planning

- **Site Selection:** Southern California is a diverse area that faces significant air pollution challenges and contains a wide variety of air pollution sources. To incorporate cumulative assessment and precautionary approaches into this pilot project, we have chosen communities with numerous air pollution sources. Some of the key selection criteria were multiple sources of diesel emissions impacting the community, as well as a concentration of industrial and commercial air pollution sources. In addition, it is important to have strong community support.

The Southern California communities of Commerce, Mira Loma, and Wilmington have been selected for this project based on comments we received during two community meetings held in late 2004. We have selected these areas to explore opportunities for community specific projects. Each of these communities has examples of multiple sources of air pollution in close proximity to homes and schools. These sources include those critical categories that are applicable to cumulative impact assessment and the exploration of precautionary approaches. A common aspect of all of these communities is goods movement.

Wilmington is home to multiple oil refineries and is situated near the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. These areas contain large sources of diesel and fugitive emissions from bulk transport and cargo handling activities. The city of Commerce is home to a wide variety of industrial facilities, numerous warehouses, a major rail yard, and a high volume of trucking and rail activity. The community of Mira Loma is located in Riverside County and is near major freeways, contains large distribution centers, and is subject to a high volume of trucking and rail activity. Each of these communities will provide us with opportunities to identify methods for assessing cumulative impacts and applying precautionary approaches in our effort to reduce children's health risks from air pollution.

- **Reduction of Risk to Children's Health:** Children can sometimes be more at risk than adults from the harmful health effects of air pollution. The ARB has made a major commitment to study the impact of air pollution on children's health, including special studies on air pollution and childhood diseases such as asthma.

A major concern in communities is diesel exhaust particulate from mobile sources. Diesel exhaust particulate is responsible for 70% of the known cancer risk from toxic air pollutants as well as contributing to other respiratory diseases. ARB's diesel risk reduction program is reducing risks statewide. This project supplements those efforts by reducing diesel impacts through enhanced enforcement and identifies new ways to reduce diesel PM at the community level.

- **Cal/EPA Cross-Media Implication:** ARB is working with DTSC on a pollution prevention project for auto body shops in the community of Commerce. ARB will also work with other BDOs and incorporate their environmental data, where available, into ARB's cumulative impacts analysis for air pollution.
- **Partnerships:** ARB will partner with the South Coast Air Quality Management District, other Cal/EPA agencies, other local agencies, community groups, and other stakeholders to complete these projects. We have established contacts within the three communities and are working with them to identify other stakeholders.

Implementation

Implementation will be carried out in cooperation with Local Advisory Groups (LAGs) in each community. Community input will be used to help prioritize and refine pilot project elements.

- **Methodology & Performance Indicators:**
 - ARB staff will work with other Cal/EPA agencies to identify methods for assessing multi-media cumulative impacts and applying these methods using the available environmental data.
 - ARB staff will work with other Cal/EPA agencies to collect available multi-media environmental data in GIS format to better understand cumulative impacts in these communities.

- ARB staff, in conjunction with local agencies and businesses, will use activity and emissions data to characterize the localized impacts of a rail yard and large distribution centers.
 - The goal of the pilot pollution prevention program is to identify the auto body shops and chrome plating shops in the community and conduct outreach and education on pollution prevention.
 - ARB staff will make use of its extensive work in the Wilmington area to assess emissions from industrial facilities, ports, and goods movement and identify control strategies.
 - ARB's diesel truck and rail enforcement pilot projects will evaluate compliance with diesel emission regulations in the selected communities to reduce excessive in-use emissions. Compliance results will be reported and shared with the communities.
 - During the implementation of the project, ARB will bring other agencies into the process as necessary and appropriate.
 - There will be an overall report on project elements at the completion of this project.
- **Public Participation:** Community leaders will be actively sought to participate in this process. Elected and appointed officials as well as residents and community activists will be contacted. ARB has begun outreach and will continue to solicit input and support in each community throughout the process.
 - **Project Work Plan & Timeline:**

	Activity	Start Date	End Date
Phase 1	1. Identify pilot project location(s)	4 th Qtr 2004	1 st Qtr 2005
	2. Define project parameters	4 th Qtr 2004	1 st Qtr 2005
Phase 2	1. Establish Local Advisory Groups (LAGs)	2 nd Qtr 2005	2 nd Qtr 2005
	2. Identify Community Issues and Regulatory Gaps	2 nd Qtr 2005	3 rd Qtr 2005
	3. Identify and Initiate Community Specific Projects	2 nd Qtr 2005	4 th Qtr 2005
Phase 3	1. Develop Children's Environmental Risk Reduction Plan (ChERRP)	4 th Qtr 2005	1 st Qtr 2006
Phase 4	1. Implement ChERRP	1 st Qtr 2006	4 th Qtr 2006
Phase 5	1. Evaluate ChERRP	3 rd Qtr 2006	4 th Qtr 2006
	2. Explore implementation options of project	4 th Qtr 2006	Ongoing

Evaluation & Deliverables

- **Deliverables:** A report on the results and status of our projects will be available at the end of the 4th quarter of 2006. The report will also contain recommendations on how these pilot projects could be applied to other areas of the state.
- **Considerations, Anticipated Challenges/Constraints:** Anticipated challenges/constraints include the accelerated timeframe of this process, availability of data and assessment methods, and resource availability.

VIII. For More Information:

Comments, Questions, or Concerns regarding this Pilot?

Please direct comments, questions, or concerns to:

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